



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

NEWS RELEASE

SNAKE RIVER FISH AND WILDLIFE OFFICE
1387 S. Vinnell Way, Room 368 • Boise, Idaho 83709
(208) 378-5243 • FAX (208) 378-5262

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Steve Duke or Meggan Laxalt, (208) 378-5243

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FINAL RECOVERY PLAN PUBLISHED FOR BRUNEAU HOT SPRINGSNAIL

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service today published a final recovery plan for the Bruneau hot springsnail (*Pyrgulopsis bruneauensis*). The snail was listed as endangered on June 17, 1998 under the Endangered Species Act.

In general, the recovery plan calls for maintaining specific flows in Hot Creek, implementing conservation measures that would increase water levels in the regional geothermal aquifer, monitoring, protecting and managing springsnail habitat and developing a habitat restoration plan. The principal threat to the springsnail is the reduction and/or elimination of their geothermal spring habitat as a result of agricultural groundwater withdrawals.

"This plan was developed to provide guidance to agencies and other parties interested in the conservation of this species. We are hopeful that when the tasks identified in the recovery plan are accomplished, we can move toward delisting," said Anne Badgley, regional director of the Service's Pacific region.

Adult Bruneau hot springsnails have a small shell that is only .22 inches long. Fresh shells are thin and transparent. Because the shells are clear to white in color, the pigmentation underneath makes the snails appear black. The snail is native to geothermal springs and seeps with temperatures ranging from 15.7 to 36.9 degrees Celsius. It is found in these habitats on the exposed surfaces of various substrates including rocks, sand, gravel, mud, and algal films. The principal threat to the springsnail is the reduction and/or elimination of their geothermal spring habitat as a result of agricultural groundwater withdrawals.

The Endangered Species Act requires the development of recovery plans for listed species unless such a plan would not promote the conservation of a particular species. The objective of the Bruneau hot springsnail recovery plan is to provide a framework for the recovery of the springsnail so that protection by the Act is no longer necessary. Recovery plans describe actions considered necessary for the conservation of the species, and estimate the time and costs associated with implementing the measures needed for recovery. Information presented during the public comment period was considered in the preparation of the final recovery plan, and is summarized in the plan's appendix.

The notice of the availability of the final recovery plan for the Bruneau hot springsnail appeared in today's *Federal Register*. Copies of the final recovery plan are available at the Service's Snake River Fish and Wildlife Office, 1387 S. Vinnell Way, Room 368, Boise, Idaho 83709, (208) 378-5243. Recovery plans approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are available online at <http://endangered.fws.gov/recovery/recplans/index.htm>.

Questions concerning the recovery plan should be directed to Steve Duke, Snake River Fish and Wildlife Office, at (208) 378-5243.

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The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System which encompasses nearly 540 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 70 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 78 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.